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akeem clayton
mastering his skill to plan

We're always told to think outside the box when it comes to the many aspects of life. Some of us abide by the rules while some of us choose to ignore them. In the world of Akeem Clayton, thinking outside the box isn't an option because the box itself doesn't exist. This mindset has allowed him to create a world within itself that not only conveys talent, skills and modern day creativity; but it also places him in a category all by himself. In the special events industry, Akeem Clayton is truly the best kept secret.

BY PHOENIX BANKS
Photographed by Deshun Smith

Clayton, a native of Waycross, Georgia, always had a passion for creativity in all realms of life. Even at an early age, his ingenious approach was taking shape. According to him, he always had a fondness for the Christmas season and he remembers creating Christmas wonderlands at his grandmother's house. "I would arrange tall angels with harps, a nativity scene, wreaths, reindeer and other wonderland elements to make the season truly come to life for our family and anyone who saw our yard." Clayton entered a wreath-making contest while in the first grade and his M & M wreath took the top prize. "My mother, who was also very creative, assisted me with the wreath. I t was something that I will never forget." It was always clear to everyone around him that this was the beginning of something greater.

Akeem Clayton founded Bezaar Events in 2005 after deciding that corporate America wasn't his purpose in life. He works as the company's principle event designer as well. "It became increasingly harder to comply with my mundane 9 to 5 routine especially when my heart was somewhere else." Clayton felt like it was his right to do what he was passionate about while enjoying it at the same time. This symbolized the birth of his company. Bezaar Events is a full service event management and design firm based out of Atlanta, Georgia. His events include corporate and social events. The name of the company itself always causes people to question it. Clayton's inspiration for his company's name Bezaar was based on the phonetic spelling of the French term *bizarre* which means strikingly out of the ordinary. Clayton's breath of fresh air approach is truly the epitome of this definition.

Clayton had to grow up fast within an industry that was already two steps ahead of him. He was the new kid on the block so he had to work extra hard

"I'm on a quest to make Bezaar Events an exclusive, mainstream brand. I want my company to be synonymous with brilliance and an extraordinary vision."

to make himself known not only to the people who would ultimately use his services, but to his colleagues as well. "I basically hit the ground running when I started Bezaar. There was no time to sit back and think about what I was doing. I had to do it first and think about it later." Luckily for Clayton, his "do it first" mentality that carried him in the beginning always proved successful. This was mainly because above all else, he knew what he was doing and his

work spoke for itself.

Like all entrepreneurs, Clayton faced many challenges with his sudden career change. "I recall one of my future colleagues telling me that I shouldn't create Bezaar because I didn't know anything about the industry. It was very discouraging to me to say the least." Nonetheless, Clayton followed his passion and took the discouraging advice as a motivation tool to keep him on track to completing his goal. "Once you have your mind set on something, it's very hard to be convinced that it's something that you shouldn't do." He notes that his grandmother, his aunt, and late mother

were all very encouraging when it came to Bezaar. This was the extra motivation that he needed.

Clayton says that his motivation also comes from within, but he also cites his spiritual background. "I was raised in the church and I know that all of my gifts come from above; therefore I know that I must you them or lose them. It's for that reason that I never give up when the challenges arise." Even though Clayton and Bezaar have been in the business for more than 3 years, he still finds that it's not as easy as he'd hoped, but this hasn't discouraged him from providing premier services for all of his clients.

He has made the dreams of many brides come true beyond their wildest dreams. His bizarre vision has allowed his wedding clients to have

day to remember on a level that was unimaginable. The same is true for all of his clients. Clayton has the gift of turning an ordinary space into something that is not only breath-taking, but picture perfect. "I truly believe in treating each client's event like it's my own personal event. I want them to walk into their event and be blown away by the décor, the design and the ambiance." In addition to brides, he has also worked with an extensive list of notable clients. He's very excited about one of his next events which will be his sister's wedding.

Clayton is working his way through his third year of business and he's hoping that this year will be one of his best. "I'm on a quest to make Bezaar Events an exclusive, mainstream brand. I want my company to be synonymous with brilliance and an extraordinary vision." He's always wanted his events to stand out among the rest and he's very passionate about his unique design and ideas. He truly has an amazing gift. Watching him develop a concept from beginning to end is something that will blow your mind.

Clayton has set out to create a brand that will ultimately place him a step above the rest. He's young, innovative, and taking this popular industry by storm. His strikingly out of the ordinary style is the breath of fresh air that so many of his clients seek. Clayton is very modest, but he knows that he is truly gifted. "I work in a crazy, unpredictable industry that I love and appreciate every day. I'm having fun doing what the heavens placed me on this earth to do. I wouldn't have it any other way." □

CONTACT AKEEM CLAYTON for more information about Bezaar Events visit: www.be-zaar.com or call 404.493.5941

